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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 3 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs, addressing the General Assembly on 23 September, suggested that at the fifty-third session it should enter into discussions on an international convention for the suppression of terrorist financing.

The French delegation suggests that these discussions should start in 1999 within the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996.

To that end the French delegation has prepared a draft convention that may serve as a basis for the Ad Hoc Committee's work. It appears as an annex to this letter.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 155.

(*Signed*) Alain **Dejammet**
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Draft international convention for the suppression of terrorist financing

The States Parties to this Convention,

Having in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of good-neighbourliness and friendly relations and cooperation among States,

Deeply concerned about the worldwide escalation of acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations,

Recalling the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, annexed to General Assembly resolution 49/60 of 9 December 1994, in which, *inter alia*, "the States Members of the United Nations solemnly reaffirm their unequivocal condemnation of all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomever committed, including those which jeopardize the friendly relations among States and peoples and threaten the territorial integrity and security of States",

Noting that the Declaration also encouraged States "to review urgently the scope of the existing international legal provisions on the prevention, repression and elimination of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, with the aim of ensuring that there is a comprehensive legal framework covering all aspects of the matter",

Recalling further resolution 52/165 of 19 January 1998 which invites States to "consider, in particular, the implementation of the measures set out in paragraphs 3 (a) to (f) of its resolution 51/210" of 17 December 1996,

Recalling further resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996, paragraph 3, subparagraph (f), of which calls upon all States "to take steps to prevent and counteract, through appropriate domestic measures, the financing of terrorists and terrorist organizations, whether such financing is direct or indirect through organizations which also have or claim to have charitable, social or cultural goals or which are also engaged in unlawful activities such as illicit arms trafficking, drug dealing and racketeering, including the exploitation of persons for purposes of funding terrorist activities, and in particular to consider, where appropriate, adopting regulatory measures to prevent and counteract movements of funds suspected to be intended for terrorist purposes without impeding in any way the freedom of legitimate capital movements and to intensify the exchange of information concerning international movements of such funds",

Noting also that financing which terrorists may obtain increasingly influences the number and seriousness of international acts of terrorism they commit,

Noting further that existing multilateral legal instruments do not specifically address such financing,

Being convinced of the urgent need to enhance international cooperation between States in devising and adopting effective measures for the prevention of the financing of terrorism as well as the prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators of actions contributing to terrorism,

Considering that the financing of terrorism is a matter of grave concern to the international community as a whole,

Noting that the activities of military forces of States are governed by rules of international law outside the framework of this Convention and that the exclusion of certain actions from the coverage of this Convention does not condone or make lawful otherwise unlawful acts, or preclude prosecution under other laws,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

For the purposes of this Convention:

(a) "Financing" means any contribution aimed at providing by direct or indirect methods funds to third parties, including through organizations which also have or claim to have charitable, cultural or social goals; such contributions may be public or private, and result from lawful or unlawful activities such as:

- Donations and fund raising,
- Commercial activities,
- Organized traffic in goods and persons,
- Robbery, racketeering, abduction and hostage-taking,
- Swindles, fraud, embezzlement of assistance or subsidies;

(b) "Military forces of a State" means the armed forces of a State which are organized, trained and equipped under its internal law for the primary purpose of national defence or security, and persons acting in support of those armed forces who are under their command, control and responsibility.

Article 2

1. Any person commits an offence within the meaning of this Convention if that person intentionally organizes or proceeds with the financing of a person or group of persons who, to his or her knowledge:

(a) Commits, or proposes to commit, in connection with an individual or collective undertaking aiming to disrupt public order, acts with the intent to:

(i) Cause death or serious bodily injury;

(ii) Cause extensive destruction of property or of the environment; or

(iii) Threaten to cause death or serious bodily injury; or cause extensive destruction of property or of the environment; or to compel a person, an international organization or a State to do or abstain from doing any act; or

(b) Commits, or proposes to commit, one of the offences within the scope of the following Conventions, subject to its ratification by the State Party:

(i) Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed On Board Aircraft, done at Tokyo on 14 September 1963;

(ii) Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, done at The Hague on 16 December 1970;

(iii) Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, done at Montreal on 23 September 1971;

(iv) Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 14 December 1973;

(v) International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 17 December 1979;

(vi) Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, adopted at Vienna on 3 March 1980;

(vii) Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, done at Montreal on 24 February 1988;

(viii) Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, done at Rome on 10 March 1988;

(ix) Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms located on the Continental Shelf, done at Rome on 10 March 1988;

(x) International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 15 December 1997.

2. Within the meaning of this Convention, acts of embezzlement, conversion or transfers of property or sums of money, in whole or in part, carried out by a person knowing such acts are to be used for committing offences referred to in this article, are also considered offences.

3. Any person also commits an offence if that person attempts to commit an offence as set forth in paragraph 1 and 2 of the present article.

4. Any person also commits an offence if that person:

(a) Participates as an accomplice to an offence as set forth in paragraph 1, 2 or 3 of the present article; or

(b) Organizes or directs others to commit an offence as set forth in paragraph 1, 2 or 3 of the present article; or

(c) In any other way contributes to the commission of one or more offences as set forth in paragraph 1, 2 or 3 of the present article, by a group of persons acting with a common purpose; such contribution shall be international and either be made with the aim of furthering the general criminal activity or purpose of the group or be made in the knowledge of the intention of the group to commit the offence or offences concerned.

Article 3

This Convention shall not apply where the offence is committed within a single State, the alleged offender and the victims are nationals of that State, the alleged offender is found in the territory of that State and no other State has a basis under article 7, paragraph 1, or article 7, paragraph 2, of this Convention to exercise jurisdiction, except that the provisions of articles 11 to 17 shall, as appropriate, apply in those cases.

Article 4

Each State Party shall adopt such measures as may be necessary:

(a) To establish as criminal offences under its domestic law the offences set forth in article 2 of this Convention;

(b) To make those offences punishable by effective, proportionate and deterrent penalties which take into account the grave nature of those offences. If the acts generating the financing are already offences under the domestic legislation of the State Party, the penalties incurred shall be increased, if necessary.

Article 5

1. Each State Party shall take the necessary measures to ensure that legal entities may be held liable when they have knowingly derived profits or participated in the perpetration of offences referred to in this Convention.

2. Subject to the fundamental legal principles of the State Party, said legal entity may incur criminal, civil or administrative liability.

3. Such liability is incurred without prejudice to the criminal liability of individuals having committed the offences or of their accomplices.

4. Each State Party shall ensure, in particular, that legal entities are punishable in an effective, proportionate and deterrent manner and that substantial economic penalties are imposed.

Article 6

Each State Party shall adopt such measures as may be necessary, including, where appropriate, domestic legislation, to ensure that criminal acts within the scope of this Convention, in particular where they are intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature and are punished by penalties consistent with their grave nature.

Article 7

1. Each State Party shall take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over offences referred to in article 2 when:

(a) The offence is committed in the territory of that State; or

(b) The offence is committed by a national of that State.

2. Each State Party may also establish its jurisdiction over any such offence when:

(a) The offence is committed against a national of that State; or

(b) The offence is committed by a stateless person who has his or her habitual residence in the territory of that State; or

(c) The offence is committed in an attempt to compel that State to do or abstain from doing any act.

3. Upon ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to this Convention, each State Party shall notify the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the jurisdiction it has established in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article under its domestic law. Should any change take place, the State Party concerned shall immediately notify the Secretary-General.

4. Each State Party shall take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over the offences set forth in article 2 in cases where the alleged offender is present in its territory and it does not extradite that person to any of the States Parties for the reason that:

(a) The offence was committed on its territory; or

(b) The offence was committed by one of its nationals.

5. Each State Party may likewise take such measures as may be necessary to establish its jurisdiction over the offences referred to in article 2 in cases where the alleged offender is present in its territory and it does not extradite that person to any of the States Parties which have established their jurisdiction in accordance with paragraph 1 or 2 of the present article.

6. When more than one State Party claims jurisdiction over one of the offences referred to in this Convention, the relevant States Parties shall strive to coordinate their actions efficiently, in particular concerning the conditions for prosecuting and the terms and conditions of mutual legal assistance.

Article 8

1. Each State Party shall take appropriate measures to allow for identification, freezing or seizure of any instrument that has contributed to the commission of the offences referred to in this Convention, for purposes of possible forfeiture.

2. Each State Party shall take appropriate measures to permit the forfeiture of property, funds and other means used or intended to be used for committing the offences referred to in this Convention.

3. Each State Party may give consideration to concluding agreements on sharing with other States Parties, on a regular or case-by-case basis, such proceeds or property, or funds derived from the sale of such proceeds or property, in accordance with its domestic law.

Article 9

1. Upon receiving information that a person who has committed or who is alleged to have committed an offence as referred to in article 2 may be present in its territory, the State Party concerned shall take such measures as may be necessary under its domestic law to investigate the facts contained in the information.

2. Upon being satisfied that the circumstances so warrant, the State Party in whose territory the offender or alleged offender is present shall take the appropriate measures under its domestic law so as to ensure that person's presence for the purpose of prosecution or extradition.

3. Any person regarding whom the measures referred to in paragraph 2 of the present article are being taken shall be entitled to:

(a) Communicate without delay with the nearest appropriate representative of the State of which that person is a national or which is otherwise entitled to protect that person's rights or, if that person is a stateless person, the State in the territory of which that person habitually resides;

(b) Be visited by a representative of that State;

(c) Be informed of that person's rights under subparagraphs (a) and (b) of this paragraph.

4. The rights referred to in paragraph 3 shall be exercised in conformity with the laws and regulations of the State in the territory of which the offender or alleged offender is present, subject to the provision that the said laws and regulations must enable full effect to be given to the purposes for which the rights accorded under paragraph 3 of the present article are intended.

5. The provisions of paragraph 3 and 4 of the present article shall be without prejudice to the right of any State Party having a claim to jurisdiction in accordance with article 7, paragraph 1, subparagraph (b), or paragraph 2, subparagraph (b), to invite the International Committee of the Red Cross to communicate with and visit the alleged offender.

6. When a State Party, pursuant to this article, has taken a person into custody, it shall immediately notify, directly or through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the States Parties which have established jurisdiction in accordance with article 7, paragraphs 1 and 2, and, if it considers it advisable, any other interested States Parties, of the fact that such person is in custody and of the circumstances which warrant that person's detention. The State which makes the investigation contemplated in paragraph 1 of the present article shall promptly inform the said States Parties of its findings and shall indicate whether it intends to exercise jurisdiction.

Article 10

1. The State Party in the territory of which the alleged offender is present shall, in cases to which article 7 applies, if it does not extradite that person, be obliged, without exception whatsoever and whether or not the offence was committed in its territory, to submit the case without undue delay to its competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution, through proceedings in accordance with the laws of that State. Those authorities shall take their decision in the same manner as in the case of any other offence of a grave nature under the law of that State.

2. Whenever a State Party is permitted under its domestic law to extradite or otherwise surrender one of its nationals only upon the condition that the person will be returned to that State to serve the sentence imposed as a result of the trial or proceeding for which the extradition or surrender of the person was sought, and this State and the State seeking the extradition of the person agree with this option and other terms they may deem appropriate, such a conditional extradition or surrender shall be sufficient to discharge the obligation set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article.

Article 11

1. The offences set forth in article 2 shall be deemed to be included as extraditable offences in any extradition treaty existing between any of the States Parties before the entry into force of this Convention. States Parties undertake to include such offences as extraditable offences in every extradition treaty to be subsequently concluded between them.

2. When a State Party which makes extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty receives a request for extradition from another State Party with which it has no extradition treaty, the requested State Party may, at its option, consider this Convention as a legal basis for extradition in respect of the offences set forth in article 2. Extradition shall be subject to the other conditions provided by the law of the requested State.

3. States Parties which do not make extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty shall recognize the offences set forth in article 2 as extraditable offences between themselves, subject to the conditions provided by the law of the requested State.

4. If necessary, the offences set forth in article 2 shall be treated, for the purposes of extradition between States Parties, as if they had been committed not only in the place in which they occurred but also in the territory of the States that have established jurisdiction in accordance with article 7, paragraphs 1 and 2.

5. The provisions of all extradition treaties and arrangements between States Parties with regard to offences referred to in article 2 shall be deemed to be modified as between States Parties to the extent that they are incompatible with this Convention.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall afford one another the greatest measure of assistance in connection with investigations or criminal or extradition proceedings brought in respect of the offences referred to in article 2, including assistance in obtaining evidence at their disposal necessary for the proceedings.

2. States Parties shall carry out their obligations under paragraph 1 of the present article in conformity with any treaties or other arrangements on mutual legal assistance that may exist between them. In the absence of such treaties or arrangements, States Parties shall afford one another assistance in accordance with their domestic law.

3. States Parties may not claim privileged communications, bank secrecy, or a priori rely on the tax nature of the offence to refuse mutual legal assistance provided for under the present article.

Article 13

None of the offences referred to in article 2 shall be regarded, for the purposes of extradition or mutual legal assistance, as a political offence or as an offence connected with a political offence or as an offence inspired by political motives. Accordingly, a request for extradition or for mutual legal assistance based on such an offence may not be refused on the sole ground that it concerns a political offence or an offence connected with a political offence or an offence inspired by political motives.

Article 14

Nothing in this Convention shall be interpreted as imposing an obligation to extradite or to afford mutual legal assistance, if the requested State Party has substantial grounds for believing that the request for extradition for offences set forth in article 2 or for mutual legal assistance with respect to such offences has been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of that person's race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin or political opinion or that compliance with the request would cause prejudice to that person's position for any of these reasons.

Article 15

1. A person who is being detained or is serving a sentence in the territory of one State Party whose presence in another State Party is requested for purposes of identification, testimony or otherwise providing assistance in obtaining evidence for the investigation or prosecution of offences under this Convention may be transferred if the following conditions are met:

(a) The person freely gives his or her informed consent; and

(b) The competent authorities of both States agree, subject to such conditions as those States may deem appropriate.

2. For the purposes of the present article:

(a) The State to which the person is transferred shall have the authority and obligation to keep the person transferred in custody, unless otherwise requested or authorized by the State from which the person was transferred;

(b) The State to which the person is transferred shall without delay implement its obligation to return the person to the custody of the State from which the person was transferred as agreed beforehand, or as otherwise agreed, by the competent authorities of both States;

(c) The State to which the person is transferred shall not require the State from which the person was transferred to initiate extradition proceedings for the return of the person;

(d) The person transferred shall receive credit for service of the sentence being served in the State from which he or she was transferred for time spent in the custody of the State to which he or she was transferred.

3. Unless the State Party from which a person is to be transferred in accordance with the present article so agrees, that person, whatever his or her nationality, shall not be prosecuted or detained or subjected to any other restriction of his or her personal liberty in the territory of the State to which that person is transferred in respect of acts or convictions anterior to his or her departure from the territory of the State from which such person was transferred.

Article 16

Any person who is taken into custody or regarding whom any other measures are taken or proceedings are carried out pursuant to this Convention shall be guaranteed fair treatment, including enjoyment of all rights and guarantees in conformity with the law of the State in

the territory of which that person is present and applicable provisions of international law, including the international law of human rights.

Article 17

States Parties shall cooperate in the prevention of the offences set forth in article 2, particularly:

(a) By taking all practicable measures, including, if necessary, adapting their domestic legislation, to prevent and counter preparations in their respective territories for the commission of those offences within or outside their territories, including:

(i) Measures to prohibit in their territories unlawful activities of persons, groups and organizations that knowingly encourage, instigate, organize, finance or engage in the commission of offences as set forth in article 2;

(ii) Measures requiring their financial institutions and other professions involved in financial transactions to improve the identification of their usual or occasional customers, as well as customers in whose interest accounts are opened. For this purpose, States shall consider:

a. Adopting regulations prohibiting the opening of anonymous accounts or the opening of accounts under obviously fictitious names;

b. With respect to the identification of legal entities, verifying the existence and the legal structure of the customer by obtaining, from the customer or public records, proof of incorporation as a company, including information on the name of the client, its legal form, its address, its directors and provisions on the legal entity's authority to bind;

c. Taking measures for preserving for at least five years the necessary documents in connection with the transactions carried out;

(b) By exchanging accurate and verified information in accordance with their domestic law, and coordinating administrative and other measures taken, as appropriate, to prevent the commission of offences as referred to in article 2.

Article 18

The State Party where the alleged offender is prosecuted shall, in accordance with its domestic law or applicable procedures, communicate the final outcome of the proceedings to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall transmit the information to the other States Parties.

Article 19

The States Parties shall carry out their obligations under this Convention in a manner consistent with the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and that of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other States.

Article 20

Nothing in this Convention entitles a State Party to undertake in the territory of another State Party the exercise of jurisdiction and performance of functions which are exclusively reserved for the authorities of that other State Party by its domestic law.

Article 21

1. Nothing in this Convention shall affect other rights, obligations and responsibilities of States and individuals under international law, in particular the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law.

2. The activities of armed forces during an armed conflict, as those terms are understood under international humanitarian law, which are governed by that law, are not governed by this Convention, and the activities undertaken by military forces of a State in the exercise of their official duties, inasmuch as they are governed by other rules of international law, are not governed by this Convention.

Article 22

1. Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention which cannot be settled through negotiation within a reasonable time shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If, within six months from the date of the request for arbitration, the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice, by application, in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

2. Each State may at the time of signature, ratification, acceptance or approval of this Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1. The other States Parties shall not be bound by paragraph 1 of this article with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.

3. Any State which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 23

1. This Convention shall be open for signature by all States from ... until ... at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

2. This Convention is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval. The instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3. This Convention shall be open to accession by any State. The instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 24

1. This Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of the deposit of the twenty-second instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. For each State ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to the Convention after the deposit of the twenty-second instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after deposit by such State of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Article 25

1. Any State Party may denounce this Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. Denunciation shall take effect one year following the date on which notification is received by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 26

The original of this Convention, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations who shall send certified copies thereof to all States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Convention, opened for signature at New York on _____.